

CURIOUS COURTSHIP DISPLAY. — My wife and I saw a most extraordinary thing yesterday morning here in our garden — a courtship display between a male Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae* L.) and a female Peacock (*Inachis io* L.). My wife was so amazed that she called me out to see it. It was quite obviously not a fight over territory. Both in fact were crawling very close to each other with wings quivering, over a patch of aubretia, apparently trying to pair. My wife says they first confronted each other in a curious way, then the Tortoiseshell twice attempted to mount on the Peacock. This, however, I missed. The display must have lasted nearly 15 minutes. Has anything of this sort been noted before? Presumably the two species are not sufficiently near related for pairing to be possible. — J. P. SANKEY-BARKER, Plas Llangattock, Crickhowell, Breconshire, 18.iv.1978.

STIGMELLA TILIAE (FREY) IN ESSEX. — Prompted by Mr. P. J. Johnson's discovery in 1976 of a colony of *S. tiliae* astride the Cambridgeshire-Essex border at Bartlow (*Ent. Rec.*, 90: 125), I looked for it in 1977 elsewhere in Essex and found five more localities, two in south Essex (VC18) and three in north Essex (VC19). In MBGBI (p. 245), I wrote that the species had a western distribution. It is now evident that my wrong opinion sprang from underrecording and microlepidopterists who search stands of *Tilia cordata* (small-leaved lime) in their areas will probably be able to establish new county records for the species. Mr. Johnson's colony was feeding solely on *T. x vulgaris* (common lime), a new foodplant for Britain; at one of the south Essex localities (Fryerning), it was also on common lime and at the other (Woodham Walter) it spilled over on to that tree from the usual foodplant.

Other leaf-miners of *T. cordata*, which are very sparsely recorded in the south-east but are present in two of the north Essex localities, are *Bucculatrix thoracella* (Thunberg) and *Roeslerstammia erxlebella* (Fabricius), the latter of which in its first instar makes a small blotch on the margin (often at the apex) of a leaf. Records for species such as these are urgently needed for forthcoming volumes of MBGBI. — A. M. EMMET, Labrey Cottage, Victoria Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3AF, 20.iv.1978.

THYMELICUS LINEOLA OCHS., NEMOPHORA FASCIELLA F., ETC., AT BLACKHEATH, 1977. — During my many years' residence in the above London suburb, *Thymelicus lineola* Ochs., the Essex Skipper, has been noted only once (in the garden about the early 1960s, clearly a stray), though abundant further east along the Thames marshes in suitable spots at least in the '50s. It was therefore a pleasant surprise, on a return visit last year (30.vii), to find *T. lineola* common in a small area — possibly also more widely — just inside a large rough fallow field very near my former house. The first one was seen (and caught for checking) on a broad grassy strip on the roadward side of the boundary-hedge, about which a *Celastrina argiolus* L. was flying.

In the area most favoured by the skippers was a large

patch of yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) in flower, and here, on one of the heads, another unexpected sight greeted me in the shape of a fresh ♀ of the very local and beautiful longhorn moth *Nemophora fasciella* F. — a species never before seen, I believe, at Blackheath (certainly not by me), though I had taken it not very far away at Abbey Wood (1963, *Ent. Rec.*, 75: 62); its foodplant, *Ballota nigra*, was close by. Some of the yarrow heads were tenanted by the Tortricoid *Dichrorampha gueneana* Obr. (= *politana* auct.), which was fairly active in the warm sunshine. (I had previously found the rather similar *Chrysanthemum*-feeding *D. alpinana* Tr. in another part of the field, in evening flight about a mass of the large white garden daisies.) *Aglais urticae* L. in some plenty jostled the skippers for possession of the yarrow and thistle heads, together with numbers of *Maniola jurtina* L.; the former was extremely erratic in this district in 1977, and indeed has been so for many years. Single specimens of *Platyptilia pallidactyla* Haw. and *Sitochroa verticalis* L. were disturbed.

The recent appearance of *T. lineola* and *N. fasciella* at Blackheath would seem to indicate a westward movement on the part of both species in North Kent during the past six years or so, analogous perhaps to the more pronounced and less recent westward spread of the Geometrid *Idaea vulpinaria* H.-S. — A. A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London, SE7 8QG.

THE LEAD-COLOURED DRAB (*ORTHOSIA POPULETI* F.) IN WEST KENT AND EAST SUSSEX. — I have this year been collecting at Brokes Wood in Southborough, Kent, and there recorded three specimens of this moth. I have in the past recorded it from here (Wadhurst), and at Dallington, Sussex, but never in any numbers, and consider the species rather scarce in these parts. — A. E. C. ADAMS, Perrins Farm, Woods Green, Wadhurst, East Sussex, TN5 6QN, 16.iv.1978.

OBSERVATIONS UPON TWO SPECIES OF SPRING LEPIDOPTERA IN HAILSHAM, NR. EASTBOURNE: *APOCHEIMA HISPIDARIA* D. & S. AND *LYCIA HIRTARIA* CLERCK. — The latter species although not common, does occur in several localities in the area. Scattered individuals were taken in Abbot's Wood on 13th April, 1977 and quite a number were taken in the area of Friston, near Jevington. This species is not recorded in Adkin, *The Moths of Eastbourne* (1930), which covered an area of seven miles radius from the centre of the town.

The former species has only been recorded from Abbot's Wood, and there is reasonable justification for saying that it is no longer common in that locality. Only a single specimen has been taken in several years collecting, on 22nd February, 1977. More recently, however, a strong colony has been investigated at Bushy Wood, near Hailsham, and the following occurrences were noted in 1978: 28th February (3), 4th March (1) and 12th March (9). It was also recorded from Park Wood, near Hailsham on 6th March, 1978, when two more specimens were taken. — MARK HADLEY, 7 Beverington Close, Eastbourne, E. Sussex, BN21 2SB. [It is perhaps worth noting that